all India level scheme. However, some suggestions like raising of indemnity level, provision of adequate premium subsidy etc. were considered.

Kisan Call Centres

2403. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kisan Call Centres have been set up in Uttaranchal to assist the farmers; and

(b) if so, the number of such KCCs opened in various districts of the hilly and backward State of Uttaranchal so far alongwith the details of their functions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Kisan Call Centre located at Kanpur replies to the queries of the farmers from the State of Uttaranchal, including all hilly districts.

A country wide common four digit number 1551 has been allocated for Kisan Call Centres (KCCs). Thirteen Kisan Call Centres located in different parts of the country provide information to the farming community throughout the country. Calls are attended from 6.00 A.M. to 10.00 P.M. on all 7 days of the week. The farmers' queries are answered in their local language by the Level-I agents located at various call centres. If the Level-I agent is not able to answer the query, the call is escalated on a conference call mode to the Level-II specialists identified for the purpose under the scheme.

Advance planning for increasing agricultural production

2404. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have directed State Governments to prepare advance planning to increase production in agriculture sector especially in growing potatoes and onions during 2006-07; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India makes advance planning for increasing the production under kharif and rabi crops in the National Conference for Kharif/Rabi Campaigns. All aspects concerning agricultural and horticultural crops like availability of seeds, fertilizers, quality planting meterial, implements, advanced agricultural techniques, agriculture finance/credit, plant protection measures, pre and post harvest management, marketing, prices, storage are discussed with the State Governments, institutes/agencies, agriculture universities, banking sector and other agencies and decisions for remedial actions are taken accordingly. The National Conference for Kharif Campaign was held on 21-22 February, 2006 in New Delhi in which strategy to enhance production of kharif crops and horticultural crops including onion and potato in 2006-07 was discussed.

Aid to Consultative Group on International Research

†2405. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the annual amount of 2.5 million dollars given to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research by Government, so far, has been increased to the amount of 10 million dollars;

(b) if not, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said institution has benefited the Indian agriculture sector during the last five years;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the contribution of these benefits in increasing agricultural production in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) There has been no increase in the amount of annual contribution to the CGIAR, which stands at US$0.75 million. But, as a result of high level discussion in this Department, it was

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.